

CHAPTER 6  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR  
OPERATION, USE, ACQUISITION, ALTERATION,  
CONSTRUCTION, AND RENOVATION OF  
MULTIPURPOSE SENIOR CITIZENS CENTERS

**6-1 DEFINITIONS**

For purposes of this chapter:

- (1) **Acquisition:** Obtaining an existing facility in fee simple or by lease for ten (10) years or more for use as a multipurpose senior center.
- (2) **Alteration or renovation:** Making modifications to an existing facility which are necessary for its effective use as a multipurpose senior center. This includes restoration, repair, expansion which is not in excess of double the square footage of the original facility, and all related physical improvements.
- (3) **Construction:** Building a new facility, including the costs of land acquisition and architectural and engineering fees or making modifications to an existing facility which are in excess of double the square footage of the original facility.
- (4) **Full-time senior center staff:** Any paid or volunteer staff person working 30 hours or more a week.
- (5) **Multipurpose agency:** One whose programs and activities also serve client groups other than older persons. A multipurpose agency may include units of local government and social service agencies. The governing board of the multipurpose agency serves as the board of

the multipurpose center. If a city or county government is the multipurpose agency, the city or county government is the governing board.

- (6) **Multipurpose senior center:** A community facility for the organization and provision of a broad spectrum of services, which shall include, but not be limited to, provision of health, social, nutritional, and educational services and the provision of facilities for recreational activities for older persons. A multipurpose senior center can have branches and/or satellites.

(a) **Branch of a senior center:** A separate or remote location of a main senior center which does not have an independent staff or programs.

(b) **Satellite of a senior center:** A separate facility from the main center, with an independent staff and programs, but which is administered through the same parent agency.

- (7) **Older person:** Any person who is 60 years of age or older.
- (8) **Operation:** The funding of personnel, travel, overhead, and equipment expenses necessary for the daily operation of a center and its programs.
- (9) **Participant:** Any eligible person who takes advantage of services and activities in a senior center.
- (10) **Part-time center staff:** Any paid or volunteer staff who work less than 30 hours a week.

- (11) **Single purpose agency:** One whose programs and activities are designed and operated only for the benefit of older persons.

## **6-2 REQUIREMENTS FOR OLDER AMERICANS ACT AND STATE FUNDING**

### **6-2-.01 General Requirements**

In order for an organization to receive state appropriations or Older Americans Act funds, the organization must demonstrate to the area agency on aging the ability to meet the administrative, fiscal, and programmatic requirements set forth in this section and comply with the applicable laws, regulations or orders, state or federal which prohibit discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, color, religion, disability, or national origin.

### **6-2-.02 ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS**

- (1) Groups or organizations eligible for state and Older American Act funds for the operation of a senior center must be chartered public or private agencies, organizations, or institutions. Non-governmental bodies must be chartered under the laws of the State of Tennessee. Governmental agencies must be created by statute, resolution, or ordinance. (See Attachment A Charter and Tax Exemption information, end Chapter 6.)
- (2) The following organizations may qualify as eligible applicant agencies provided that conditions in #1 are met:

- (a) County government;
  - (b) City government;
  - (c) Local housing authority;
  - (d) Community council on aging, county commission on aging;
  - (e) Senior citizens club;
  - (f) Educational institutions;
  - (g) Church, synagogue, or religious organization; and/or,
  - (h) Civic organizations.
- (3) The following may not qualify as eligible applicants:
- (a) Federal operating agency or department;
  - (b) State operating department or agency; and/or,
  - (c) An individual;

### **6-3 MATCHING REQUIREMENTS**

#### **6-3-.01 Federal Funds**

Federal funds may be used to pay part of the cost of operation of a multipurpose senior citizens center with the following provision:

The area agency will designate match requirements with at least a minimum of 10% local cash or in-kind.

#### **6-3-.02 State Funds**

State appropriations must be equally matched by local resources--50% state and 50% local.

- (1) In the initial year, at least 10% of the local match must be in cash.
- (2) In each succeeding year of funding thereafter, the grantee must increase the level of local cash funds used to support the program by 1% or \$100, whichever is greater.

#### **6-4 OTHER FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

A senior center shall secure the financial resources necessary to meet its obligations by seeking funding from local sources in ways that are compatible with the requirements of the sponsoring organization and major funders, and that assure accountability for the funds received. Sources of funds may include corporate gifts, individual donations, bequests and endowments and at least two major fundraising activities.

##### **6-4-.01 Grants and Contracts**

A center shall pursue those grants and contracts:

- (1) Whose regulations are consistent with the senior center philosophy and the particular center's purposes;
- (2) That strengthen the role of the senior center in the community; and,
- (3) Which are financially feasible.

##### **6-4-.02 Fundraising**

Fundraising activities conducted by center-sponsored groups (e.g., participant or membership organization,

RSVP, senior aides, and other appropriate groups) shall be approved by the center director or governing body.

**6-4-.03 Contributions**

- (1) Center participants may contribute toward the cost of services and activities where appropriate and according to their ability to pay.
- (2) Written procedures shall be developed and approved by the area agency on aging which makes provisions for contributions, charges or fees. These contributions, charges or fees shall be:
  - (a) Based on costs, including overhead; and,
  - (b) Equitable, with provision made for those unable to pay.
- (3) Persons under age 60 may participate in activities on a space-available basis upon payment of a fee that covers the full cost of the service.

**6-4-.04 Membership Dues**

Membership dues, if permitted by the sponsor and funding source, shall be determined by the governing body in consultation with staff and participants. Provision shall be made for those unable to pay dues. No older person may be denied a service provided by the Older Americans Act or state funds because of non-payment of dues.

**6-5 MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**6-5-.01 Mission Statement**

A senior center shall have written statements that express its basic purpose and mission which shall be consistent with the Senior Center Philosophy\*, and with the character of its service area. The mission statement shall be developed by the board, staff and participants and shall be written in a form suitable for distribution and available to all concerned persons. Purpose statements shall be reviewed regularly by the governing body, staff and participants to determine their adequacy, and modified as appropriate. Any conflicts in purpose with sponsoring or funding organizations shall be resolved.

**6-5-.02 Goals and Objectives**

- (1) A senior center shall have written goal statements. These shall be:
  - (a) Established as part of the center's planning process for achievement in the current program year and for longer range development, and
  - (b) Defined so that progress can be measured.

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\*The Senior Center philosophy and other standards developed by NCOA/NISC in the "Senior Center Standards and Self-Assessment Workbook," Guidelines for Practice, 1990, are reflected in these policies.

- (2) Goals and objectives shall be derived from a senior center's purposes and based on the needs and interests of older persons and acknowledgment of the availability of community resources in the center's service area.
- (3) Goals and objectives shall include:
  - (a) Identification of the population and geographic area to be served (i.e., service area).
  - (b) Targeting resources to meet the needs of older persons with greatest economic or social need with particular attention to lower income minority persons.
  - (c) Examination of information from an assessment of the needs and interests of older persons in its service area conducted by the center or obtained from another organization. This shall include an examination of:
    - 1. Demographic information;
    - 2. Number of persons in the service area;
    - 3. Needs and interests of other service providers who serve older persons, community agencies and leaders as identified in other surveys; and,
    - 4. A survey of community resources available to strengthen center



activities and services or provide additional activities and services.

(d) Determination of priorities for the development of activities and services that will enhance an older person's efforts to cope with daily living and will help them to participate in community life.

(4) Goals and objectives shall be developed by governing body, staff and participants and shall be written in a form suitable for distribution and available to all concerned persons.

(5) Goals and objectives shall be reviewed regularly by governing body, staff and participants to reflect changes in the service area and in the program itself. As a result of such review, goal statements shall be modified as appropriate.

## **6-6 ORGANIZATION**

### **6-6-.01 Governing Documents**

(1) A senior center shall be governed by written documents (e.g., constitution or charter, bylaws) that establish its organizational structure, and the roles and responsibilities of component groups (governing body, advisory committee, staff, participants, etc.).

(2) A center's governing documents shall be made available for viewing upon request by

participants, governing bodies, staff, and concerned persons in the community.

- (3) A center's governing documents shall be utilized in ongoing center operation, and shall be reviewed periodically and revised as needed.
- (4) A center's governing documents shall comply with all applicable federal, state and local statutes and regulations and be on file in a central location at the center, as well as with the area agency on aging.

#### **6-6-.02 Organizational Structure**

A senior center shall have written statements and organizational charts which explain the organizational structure and channels for communication. These documents shall be made available for viewing upon request to governing body, staff, participants and interested persons in the community, and utilized in the ongoing center operation.

- (1) The center's organizational structure shall express the relationships of all components (governing body, advisory committee, staff, participants, volunteers, etc.).
- (2) If a senior center is a program or unit of a larger organization, or a part of a network of centers, or a department or program of a local public agency, the center's relationship to these entities shall be clearly defined.

- (3) If a senior center is part of a network of centers, its relationship to the other centers in the network and to the network administration shall be indicated on the organizational chart.

**6-6-.03 Governing and Advisory Bodies**

(1) Requirements for Single Purpose Agencies

The single purpose agency senior center must have a governing board meeting the following requirements:

- (a) The governing board shall have a minimum of ten members, but be limited to a working number, composed of center participants and other individuals from the community including representatives from social service agencies, business, financial institutions, and community service organizations. Center staff and staff of other agencies receiving Older Americans Act funds shall be prohibited from serving as voting members of the board.
- (b) The governing board shall have written bylaws that define the following:
1. Qualifications for membership;
  2. Selection of board members, tenure of office, and filling of vacancies;
  3. Election of officers and specification of officers' duties;
  4. Frequency of meetings;

5. Committees (standing and ad hoc);
6. Parliamentary procedures for the conduct of meetings, including quorum requirements and recording of minutes;
7. Procedures for amending the bylaws; and,
8. Provision of dissolution of the organization so that no remaining assets can accrue to the benefit of any individual or group of individuals.

(c) The governing board shall have the following responsibilities:

1. To hold regularly scheduled meetings at least quarterly and make minutes available for viewing upon request to interested individuals;
2. To develop and review purposes, goals and objectives of the center at least annually;
3. To establish policies and procedures;
4. To maintain standards of operation;
5. To annually evaluate activities and services, as well as general operation;
6. To adopt and implement an annual budget and review applications for funding prior to submission to area agencies;
7. To make contracts;
8. To maintain financial records;

9. To provide for a regular, independent audit;
  10. To employ a senior center director and delegate authority to that person for management of daily center affairs, in accordance with established policies and practices;
  11. To obtain adequate buildings and equipment;
  12. To exercise its influence with other agencies, groups, and systems in the service area in order to insure the provision of adequate programs for older persons;
  13. To plan and carry out public relations activities;
  14. To assist in resource development and fund-raising; and,
  15. To actively seek opportunities and recommend to the director partnerships that promote and/or expand center services.
- (d) Committees of a single purpose agency senior center governing board shall have clearly defined responsibilities, designated members, regular meetings, and have minutes available

to the governing body, funding agencies, and other interested persons.

- (e) Satellite centers of single purpose agencies may establish advisory committees for the operation of the satellite center.

(2) Requirements for Multipurpose Agencies

The governing board of the multipurpose agency serves as the board of the multipurpose center. If a city or county government is the multipurpose agency, the city council or county commission is the governing board.

- (a) The governing board must establish an advisory committee to the senior center whose responsibilities must include:

1. To inform and advise the governing body and staff about individual and community needs;
2. To assist the governing body of the center in formulating policies and practices by making recommendations concerning effective programming;
3. To advise and make recommendations on policy matters to the governing board;
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs and activities within the center and make appropriate recommendations;

5. To propose new services and activities for the senior center;
  6. To review and comment on the annual application for funding request prior to submission to the governing board; and,
  7. To conduct periodic review of bylaws.
- (b) Members of the governing body of the multipurpose agency (e.g., city council, county commission, agency board of directors) may not serve as voting members of the advisory committee of the senior center. They may serve in a non-voting capacity.
- (c) An advisory committee shall have a minimum of ten members, but be limited to a working number, as determined by the governing board, composed of center participants and other individuals from the community, including representatives from social service agencies, business, financial institutions, and community service organizations. Center staff and staff of other agencies receiving Older Americans Act funds shall be prohibited from serving as voting members of the advisory committee.
- (d) An advisory committee shall be operated according to written and approved bylaws.

**6-7 COORDINATION OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND RESOURCES**

**6-7-.01 Agency Coordination**

A senior center shall function as a focal point to make community services more available to older persons by forming cooperative service and referral linkages with community agencies and organizations. To develop such linkages, a center shall:

- (1) Identify agencies, organizations and individual providers that could or do offer services to older persons (such as Social Security, hospitals, community colleges, libraries, and others); and make appropriate agreements for mutual referrals and cooperative services provision that contain clear statements of each agency's responsibility and appropriate follow-up mechanisms.
- (2) Encourage other providers, where appropriate, to collocate their services within the senior center, in order to make their services more accessible to the community's older population; or arrange for the center to use the facilities of other organizations.
- (3) Encourage cross-training, joint planning, and mentoring efforts.
- (4) Coordinate services in such a manner that services currently being provided by other agencies are not duplicated.



**6-7-.02 Access to Services**

A senior center shall assist older persons to access other community services. To accomplish this a center shall:

- (1) Provide information about and referral to available services and resources.
- (2) Assist older persons in obtaining the services of other agencies and organizations, if necessary.
- (3) Make appropriate follow-ups.

**6-8 PUBLIC INFORMATION/MARKETING**

- (1) A senior center shall provide information on the center's program and community resources through the use of available media (e.g., television, radio, newspaper, newsletters, and other available media as indicated in Minimum Standards for Senior Centers).
- (2) A senior center shall make its purposes, program statements, and reports on its operation and programs available to the public for viewing upon request for information, comment, and suggestions.

**6-9 CENTER PROGRAMS**

**6-9-.01 Range of Services**

- (1) A senior center shall offer a broad range of services and activities within the center, other appropriate locations (off site), and through linkages with other agencies.

- (2) A senior center program shall respond to older persons' interrelated needs and interests (social, intellectual, cultural, economic, emotional and physical).
- (3) Activities and services shall promote personal growth and improve the self-image of older persons by providing opportunities to:
  - (a) Promote a healthy lifestyle;
  - (b) Learn new skills;
  - (c) Develop satisfying interpersonal relationships;
  - (d) Develop leadership capabilities;
  - (e) Develop creative capacities;
  - (f) Develop cultural enrichment;
  - (g) Assume responsibilities and increase independence;
  - (h) Participate in activities of interest; and,
  - (i) Promote volunteer opportunities.

**6-9-.02 Participant Diversity**

- (1) A center's program shall respond to individual differences such as, ethnicity, values, experiences, needs, interests, abilities, skills, age and health status by providing flexible programming and operating hours.
- (2) A center shall provide opportunities for a variety of types and levels of involvement, including:
  - (a) Small and large group activities;

- (b) Active and spectator participation;
- (c) Intergenerational programs;
- (d) Involvement in the general community; and,
- (e) Services to individuals.

**6-9-.03 Program Standards**

To receive support under the state and federal appropriation for aging programs, the multipurpose senior center shall provide services based on the "Minimum Standards for Senior Centers" chart (Attachment B to this chapter).

**6-10 ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL**

**6-10-.01 Staffing Requirements**

- (1) There shall be a sufficient number of qualified personnel to implement the activities and services planned to meet the center's goals and objectives, and to insure adequate staffing for the number of persons served and the frequency of service provided.
- (2) Preference should be given to older persons for staff positions, whenever possible, when other job qualifications are equal.
- (3) All project staff shall have clearly delineated duties and responsibilities and adequate supervision.
- (4) A senior center shall make use of community manpower resources to supplement its personnel by:

- (a) Recruiting older persons to participate in the work of the center;
- (b) Recruiting volunteers from service, civic and religious organizations; and,
- (c) Making agreements with other agencies for mutual references, shared staff and collocation of services to better reach the community's older residents.

**6-10-.02 Responsibilities of the Senior Center Director**

Administrative responsibilities for the senior center director shall include:

- (1) Development of center's overall work plan and supervision of day-to-day operation;
- (2) Involvement of older persons in the center's operation and program;
- (3) Personnel management;
- (4) Training and staff development;
- (5) Review and report on the program, operation, facility and equipment;
- (6) Emergency arrangements; and,
- (7) Staff support for the advisory committee or board.

**6-10-.03 Joint Responsibilities of Center Director and Governing Board**

Responsibilities of the center director in conjunction with the governing board or advisory council include:

- (1) Planning and program development;
- (2) Resource development and fundraising;

- (3) Community relations; and,
- (4) Fiscal management and budgeting.

These responsibilities may be delegated as appropriate.

#### **6-10-.04 Volunteers**

- (1) Policies governing volunteers shall include:
  - (a) Clear definition of responsibilities;
  - (b) A system for recruitment;
  - (c) Orientation, training and supervision;
  - (d) A channel for volunteer input into center planning and operation;
  - (e) Ongoing formal and informal recognition; and,
  - (f) A formal method for termination for unsatisfactory performance.
- (2) The relationship between paid and volunteer workers shall be clearly defined in writing and distributed to all staff.

#### **6-10-.05 Personnel Policies, Practices and Procedures**

- (1) Personnel policies shall be written in a handbook or other suitable form and provided to staff, governing body, and, as appropriate, to other agencies. Procedures and criteria in at least the following areas shall be included:
  - (a) Recruitment, hiring, probation, dismissal;
  - (b) Retirement;
  - (c) Insurance;
  - (d) Leave, vacation, holidays and other benefits;
  - (e) Grievances and disciplinary actions;

- (f) Performance appraisal and promotion;
  - (g) Salary ranges and increases;
  - (h) Staff development and training;
  - (i) Channels for staff input to management;
  - (j) Position classification (if applicable); and,
  - (k) Special policies regarding volunteer staff.
- (2) Wages, salary and hiring practices shall be consistent with requirements of funders and all applicable government laws and regulations.
- (3) Each staff person's performance shall be evaluated at least annually, according to an established procedure. Performance appraisal shall include:
- (a) A written performance appraisal based on objective and job-related criteria;
  - (b) Review of the appraisal in a face-to-face interview; and,
  - (c) Opportunity for written dissent to be part of the personnel record.
- (4) Staff records are confidential and shall be handled accordingly. Each staff person has the right to see his/her own file. Staff records must contain at least the following:
- (a) Application for employment, including resume;
  - (b) Letters of reference;
  - (c) Job description;
  - (d) Letter of employment;

- (e) Record of compensation, promotion and salary adjustments;
  - (f) Evaluation and commendations;
  - (g) Disciplinary actions;
  - (h) Correspondence on personnel matters; and,
  - (i) Record of training received.
- (5) Job Descriptions
- (a) There shall be a written job description for all staff positions (paid and volunteer, full-time, part-time and temporary), which defines responsibilities for providing an operation and program to achieve the senior center's goals, with maximum efficiency and accountability. Each job description shall state at a minimum:
    - 1. Position title;
    - 2. Position classification (if applicable);
    - 3. Qualifications;
    - 4. Duties and responsibilities;
    - 5. Scope of authority;
    - 6. Lines of communication for supervision and reporting; and,
    - 7. Salary range and benefits.
  - (b) All staff members shall be given a copy of their job descriptions which shall be discussed with them at the time of employment.

(c) The governing board or center director shall review annually each job description with staff and revise as appropriate.

**6-10-.06 Conflict of Interest**

No paid staff may serve as a member on the governing board of directors. A center director, by virtue of his/her position in the center, will serve as staff support to the board in order to provide technical information.

**6-10-.07 Code of Conduct**

No senior center employee or agent shall solicit or accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from service providers, contractors, or potential contractors. To the extent possible under local, state and federal law, rules, and regulations, penalties or other disciplinary actions will be applied for violations of this code by employees of senior centers.

**6-10-.08 Nepotism-Hiring of Relatives**

A senior center must adhere to all policies regarding nepotism as set forth in Section 5-3-.05 (11) of this manual.

**6-10-.09 Training**

(1) A senior center shall have a program of training and development for paid and volunteer staff which will enhance the skills and job performance capacity of personnel.



- (2) Documentation of training and development provided must be on file in personnel records. Such a program may provide:
- (a) Orientation;
  - (b) Ongoing in-service education;
  - (c) Periodicals, books and other resource materials;
  - (d) Staff seminars and study groups;
  - (e) Encouragement of participation in conferences, seminars and training sessions related to the field of aging and/or senior center program and operation by providing time off, and, when possible, financial assistance to cover expenses;
  - (f) Attendance at any training required by the state and/or the area agency on aging;
  - (g) Visits to other senior centers; and
  - (h) Individual membership in professional organizations (e.g., the Tennessee Federation for the Aging, Inc.; the National Council on the Aging, Inc.; the National Institute of Senior Centers; regional and state senior center directors associations; and other relevant groups).

**6-10-.10 Emergency Procedures**

- (1) Emergency arrangements shall be made by the center director, in consultation with the fire department

and other relevant agencies, for dealing with personal emergencies in the center and on trips, such as heart attacks, stroke or other seizure; fire; power failure; and natural disaster. A written record of all incidents shall be filed by the center director and reported to the governing board whether or not there is apparent injury or property damage.

- (2) Personnel shall be designated and trained as emergency preparedness officers in the center and on trips.
- (3) Written emergency procedures shall include appropriate individuals to contact in case of an emergency. The following shall be posted in conspicuous places throughout the center:
  - (a) Telephone numbers for fire department, police, physicians, ambulance, hospital emergency room, and local emergency management office;
  - (b) Steps to be take in each type of emergency;
  - (c) Location of first aid and other supplies; and,
  - (d) Evacuation routes.
- (4) Procedures for fire safety shall be adopted, including provision for fire drills, inspection and maintenance of fire extinguishers and smoke detectors. Local fire department personnel should

be requested to do periodic inspections and training.

(a) Periodic drills and training shall be scheduled and carried out:

1. Fire drills shall be held at least once a year.
2. First aid training, including such techniques as cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the Heimlich maneuver, shall be held regularly; and,
3. Emergency disaster drills shall be held periodically. The senior center shall request the assistance of the local emergency management office, if feasible.

(b) Centers shall have written assurances for coordination with the area agency on aging disaster preparedness plan.

- (5) The center shall be equipped with adequate supplies and equipment for emergency first aid. If possible, personnel trained in first aid shall be on hand whenever the center is open.

## **6-11 FISCAL MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**

### **6-11-.01 Bookkeeping**

- (1) Accurate and complete bookkeeping records shall be maintained.

- (2) A senior center shall have written procedures for centralized cash control, including:
  - (a) Recording cash receipts and expenditures;
  - (b) Depositing cash;
  - (c) Separation of cash handling from record-keeping; and,
  - (d) Periodic checks of petty cash and other cash funds.

#### **6-11-.02 Purchasing**

- (1) A senior center shall have written purchasing procedures, including:
  - (a) An approval system for all purchases;
  - (b) Names of persons authorized to contract or purchase for the center;
  - (c) Obtaining competitive price quotes or bids; and,
  - (d) Separation of ordering and receiving functions.
- (2) A senior center shall have a documented system of storage and inventory control.

#### **6-11-.03 Risk Protection**

A senior center shall have a risk protection program (insurance coverage) that adheres to all policies set forth in Section 5-3-.05(5) of this manual.

#### **6-11-.04 Accountability and Reporting**

- (1) A senior center shall prepare fiscal reports disclosing its full financial condition.

- (2) A full audit shall be performed at least every two years by a qualified accountant independent of the center. The audit report shall be submitted to the governing body and made available to funding sources, center participants and the public on request. (General audit requirements and responsibilities for service providers are specified in Chapter 11 of this manual.)
- (3) At least quarterly, those responsible for center administration shall prepare financial reports, including balance sheets, statements of income and expense, cumulative and comparative budgets, and such reports shall be submitted to the governing body or its designated authority and made available to center participants and the public on request.
- (4) Reports related to income provided for special purposes (grants, contracts, special projects, etc.) shall be prepared and submitted to funding sources as required.
- (5) In-kind contributions shall be recorded and documented in compliance with income source regulations as set forth in Chapter 11 of this manual.
- (6) The fiscal reporting practices employed for center operational funds shall be applied to separate

funds maintained by a center's membership or participant organization.

- (a) Accurate and complete records shall be maintained.
- (b) Records shall be reviewed by administrative staff or governing body.
- (c) Records shall be reviewed annually by the governing body's financial committee and audited by a qualified accountant.

## **6-12 RECORDS AND REPORTS**

### **6-12-.01 Program Records and Reports**

- (1) A senior center shall keep a system of records on its services and activities in order to document current operations, meet funding requirements, promote community support, and guide future planning. These records shall include at least the following:
  - (a) Descriptions of services and activities provided;
  - (b) Rosters of persons served;
  - (c) Number of unduplicated persons served, as required by the area agency on aging reporting requirements, by service;
  - (d) Number of service and activity units (referrals, interview hours, socialization hours) for each type of service and activity; and,

- (e) Participant assessments of services and activities.
- (2) These records shall be used to prepare reports and to meet planning, evaluation, and legal requirements and to maintain accountability to the community. A senior center shall submit program reports at least quarterly to the area agency on aging and its governing body.

**6-12-.02 Participant Records**

- (1) A senior center shall establish and maintain appropriate participant records, using the Tennessee Commission on Aging standardized Participant Information Form (Attachment C at the end of this section) to record basic information about the participant.
- (2) Records of the participant's involvement in the center program may include:
  - (a) Interests and skills;
  - (b) Attendance information at all center programs;
  - (c) Volunteer activities; and,
  - (d) Case reports, including a referral and follow-up information.
- (3) Participant records and reports shall be reviewed periodically by appropriate staff to evaluate their adequacy and continued usefulness.

#### **6-12-.03 Retention of Records**

- (1) All records shall be retained by recipient agencies for a period of three years plus the current year with the following qualifications:
  - (a) The records shall be retained beyond the three year period if an audit is in progress or exceptions have not been resolved.
  - (b) Records for equipment which was acquired with federal funds shall be retained for three years after final disposition of the property.
  - (c) For project awards continued or renewed on an annual or essentially annual basis, the retention period for each year's records starts from the date of submission of the annual expenditure report for that year.
- (2) Original documents, such as invoices, checks, time records, and payrolls in support of direct costs, may be retained in general recipient of award files or in the responsible aging program unit files provided the accounting records contain adequate references for identifying and locating the original documents. Microfilm or microfiche documents may be substituted for original records.



#### **6-12-.04 Annual Report**

A senior center shall prepare an accomplishment/ highlights or annual report, as reflected in Minimum Standards for Senior Centers, providing an overview of the center's program and operation, and distribute or make it available to board and, upon request, to staff, participants, funders, sponsor and the general public.

#### **6-12-.05 Confidentiality**

Each senior center must have written procedures to protect the confidentiality of information collected about older persons as set forth in Section 5-7 of this manual.

### **6-13 EVALUATION**

#### **6-13-.01 Types of Evaluation**

- (1) Ongoing monitoring and assessment of activities and services shall be conducted as part of the evaluation process.
- (2) A formal evaluation of the center's program and operation shall be conducted at least annually by an evaluation committee composed of participants, staff, board, or advisory committee and other community representatives.

#### **6-13-.02 Independent Evaluation**

A senior center may choose to have a periodic independent program evaluation conducted by appropriate professionals working with the center's evaluation committee.

### **6.13-.03 Areas of Evaluation**

A senior center evaluation shall include arrangements to review and examine at least the following:

- (1) The participants' evaluation of each activity and service.
- (2) The extent to which the activity and service achieves stated qualitative and quantitative objectives, and the barriers to their fulfillment.
- (3) The extent to which the program is meeting the center's stated goals.
- (4) The extent to which the center is meeting the needs and interests of the community's older persons.
- (5) The relationship between the center and community service organizations.
- (6) The effectiveness of linkages with other agencies in making services more accessible to older persons.
- (7) The adequacy of the facility, equipment and furnishings.
- (8) The costs and resources required for each activity and service.
- (9) The effectiveness of communication within the center, with other organizations, and within the community.
- (10) The extent to which the participants are involved in the center's operation.

- (11) The status of the center in comparison with the senior center standards by means of the NISC self-assessment instrument.

#### **6-13-.04 Sources of Evaluation Information**

Information from ongoing monitoring and assessments of activities and services shall be used in evaluation in addition to information from the center's records and through special information collection efforts. In all cases, safeguards shall be maintained to protect the privacy of the participants.

#### **6-13-.05 Evaluation Report**

- (1) The center evaluation committee shall prepare a report on its findings containing a description of achievements and recommendations for improving the center's operation or program.
- (2) Information on the results of the center's evaluation efforts shall be used in planning and program development and shall be presented to the participants, staff, board, advisory committee and appropriate organizations.

#### **6-13-.06 Funds for Evaluation**

Adequate funds for evaluation should be included as part of a senior center's operating budget.

**6-14           ACQUISITION, ALTERATION, RENOVATION, OR CONSTRUCTION  
REQUIREMENTS FOR OLDER AMERICANS ACT FUNDS**

**6-14-.01   General Requirements**

The use of Older Americans Act funds for acquisition, alteration, renovation or construction of a facility for use as a multipurpose senior citizens center is subject to the following requirements:

- (1) The area agency must obtain the approval of the state agency before making an award for constructing a facility.
- (2) The state agency may approve the construction of a facility after considering the views of the area agency if it finds that there is no other suitable facility available to be a multipurpose senior center.
- (3) The area agency may make an award for purchasing or constructing a facility only if there are no suitable facilities for leasing.
- (4) The sponsor must not select a facility for acquisition or for lease that results in the displacement of any existing site occupants (residents) without presenting site plan and pertinent conditions to the area agency on aging for evaluation and allocation of funds for reimbursement of relocation expenses.

#### 6-14-.02 Length of Use

The facility must be acquired, leased or constructed under long-term agreements. An acquisition purchase option and conditions of long-term lease arrangements must be addressed in contractual terms, and as a minimum:

- (1) A facility renovated or altered to be used as a senior center must be used for that purpose for at least five years after completion of renovation of alteration, if the amount of Older Americans Act funds expended is \$10,000 or more. This includes any restoration, repair or expansion to facility.
- (2) A facility acquired with Older Americans Act funds to be used as a multipurpose senior center must be used for that purpose for at least ten years from the date of acquisition.
- (3) A facility constructed to be used as a multipurpose senior center must be used for that purpose for at least 20 years after completion of construction.
- (4) Any area agency wishing to obtain a waiver of the requirements in the above paragraphs in this section must submit a written request to the Tennessee Commission on Aging describing the unusual circumstances as justification. The Commission will forward the request to the Administration on Aging.

#### **6-14-.03 Plans and Specification Requirements**

- (1) Any center requesting Older Americans Act funds for acquisition, alteration, renovation or construction, where the total contract exceeds \$10,000, must submit plans and specifications of existing and applicable proposed construction prepared by a licensed architect or engineer to the area agency along with funding application. Included also with funding application should be applicable certifications of local code and ordinance compliance.
- (2) The plans and specifications for an award for acquiring, altering, renovating or constructing a multipurpose senior center facility must comply with all state and local regulations relating to minimum standards of construction.
- (3) The area agency must assure the technical adequacy of any proposed alteration or renovation of a multipurpose senior center assisted under the Older Americans Act. The area agency assures technical adequacy by requiring that any alteration or renovation of a multipurpose senior center that affects the load bearing members of the facility is structurally sound and complies with all applicable local or state ordinances, laws or building codes. In the absence of appropriate codes, the area agency will require

compliance with Chapter 23 of the Uniform Building Code or Chapter 12 of the Standard Building Code.

- (4) A senior center should not be located in a flood-prone area as determined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. However, in accordance with the Flood Protection Act of 1973, if it is determined that the project will be within an identified flood plain, evidence must be provided of having flood insurance coverage before the project can be approved.

#### **6.14-.04 Federal Labor Standards**

- (1) A recipient of an Older Americans Act award for altering, renovating or constructing a facility to be used as a multipurpose senior center, where the contract exceeds \$2,500, must comply with the requirements of the Davis-Bacon Act and other mandatory federal labor standards. Requirements for wage/rate determinations may be obtained from the State Agency.
- (2) The sponsor must not contract with any general contractor, subcontractor or builder that discriminates against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; that pays employees less than federally determined prevailing wage rates; that does not adhere to provisions of the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards (Davis-Bacon) Act;

or that is not bondable for the contract amount of construction in question. Area agencies on aging must require that contractors' qualification forms be submitted along with application to the area agency.

- (3) The contractor must abide by all provisions of the applicable laws, regulations or orders, state or federal, listed in Chapter 5 of this manual which prohibits discrimination.

#### **6.14-.05 Requirements for Historic Structures**

A recipient of an Older Americans Act award for altering, renovating or adding on to a facility to be used as a multipurpose senior center must comply with the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended. Inquiries should be made to the Review and Compliance Coordinator, Tennessee Historical Commission, 2941 Lebanon Road, Nashville, Tennessee 37214, (615) 532-1550.

#### **6-14-.06 Restrictions of Use**

Any facility which is to be used as a multipurpose senior center operated, altered, acquired, renovated or constructed using Older Americans Act funds or operated using state funds:

- (1) May not be used and may not be intended to be used for sectarian instruction or as a place for religious worship, in whole or in part;



- (2) May be shared with other age groups; however, funds received may support only:
  - (a) That part of the facility used by older persons; or,
  - (b) A proportionate share of the costs based on the extent of use of the facility by older persons.

**6-15 FACILITY GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

**6-15-.01 Responsibilities**

- (1) A senior center's governing body shall have full responsibility for center facilities, grounds and equipment. This responsibility may be delegated to a committee or to a designated staff member.
- (2) Participants, potential participants and staff shall be involved in the design of facilities and selection of equipment and furniture for their use.
- (3) The governing body or its designee shall seek the advice of individuals with expertise in designing facilities and selecting equipment for use by older persons.
  - (a) For construction, remodeling, building or site selection, the center shall consult a qualified architect.
  - (b) For interior design, including furniture and equipment selection, the center shall consult

people experienced in methods of compensating for visual, auditory and motor limitations.

- (4) When a facility is rented or shared, or when space in several facilities is used, the governing body shall have written agreements with all relevant parties concerning time of use; maintenance and repairs; equipment use; security and safety; and liability and insurance. Such facilities shall conform to all requirements of these standards.

#### **6-15-.02 Location**

- (1) The selection of a site for a center shall be based on information on older persons in its service area and on the advice of public and voluntary agencies serving the elderly. The following factors shall be given consideration in choosing a site:
  - (a) Demographic information and projections;
  - (b) Accessibility to the maximum number of people;
  - (c) Proximity to other services and facilities;
  - (d) Convenience to public or private transportation, or location within comfortable walking distance for participants;
  - (e) Avoidance of structural barriers or difficult terrain; and,

- (f) Safety and security of participants and staff.
- (2) When appropriate, a senior center shall make arrangements to offer activities and services at other locations in its service area.
- (3) No senior center facility may be closed or relocated without prior written approval of the area agency on aging.

#### **6-15-.03 Visibility**

- (1) A senior center facility shall be visible and easily recognized as a community focal point for the concerns and interests of older persons.
- (2) The facility's external appearance shall be attractive and appropriate to its use.
- (3) Identification signs shall be attractive with large lettering, and shall make clear the purpose of the facility.
- (4) The senior center should be listed in the local telephone directory under "Senior Centers."

#### **6-15-.04 Design**

- (1) The facility should be adequate in size and designed to carry out senior center activities and services. Where feasible, senior centers should adhere to the facility size as recommended in "Minimum Standards for Senior Centers" and the National Council on Aging's Senior Centers Standards.

- (2) A center shall take necessary actions to create barrier-free access and movement within the facility for handicapped older persons in conformance with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation act of 1973, the Architectural Barriers Act of 1973 and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990. State requirements for compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are specified in T.C.A. Chapter 25, Title 53, Section 53-2539 and places responsibility for enforcement of this Act with the State Fire Marshal's Office, Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance.

**6-15-.05 Furnishings and Equipment**

Furniture and equipment to be used by participants at a senior center should, where possible, adhere to National Council on Aging's Senior Center Standards.

**6-15-.06 Safety**

- (1) The facility shall be designed, constructed and maintained in compliance with all applicable federal, state and local building safety and fire codes, including the Occupational Safety and Health Act.
- (2) The facility must comply with the more stringent requirements of either the 1976 101 Life Safety Code or the Tennessee Standard Building Code.

- (a) The 1971 Life Safety Code is available from the National Fire Protection Association, 470 Atlantic Avenue, Boston, MA 02210.
  - (b) A copy of the Tennessee State Building Code is available from Southern Building Code Congress, 1116 Brown-Marx Building, Birmingham, AL 35203.
- (3) If in the judgment of the area agency or the State Agency, existing fire and safety laws, ordinances or codes are inadequate to protect the health and safety of participants, the State Agency may require a recipient of any multipurpose senior center award to:
  - (a) Comply with provisions of the applicable building occupancy classification of the National Fire protection Association "Life Safety Code" (NFPA, No. 101, 1976 edition).
- (4) Where necessary, arrangements should be made with local authorities to provide safety zones for those arriving by motor vehicle and adequate traffic signals for pedestrian crossings.
- (5) The exterior and interior of the facility shall be safe and secure, with well-lighted areas, paved exterior walkways, all stairs and ramps equipped with handrails.
- (6) Bathrooms and kitchens shall include safety features appropriate to their special uses (such

as non-skid floors, kitchen fire extinguishers,  
bathroom grab-bars).

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## CHARTER OF INCORPORATION

A charter of incorporation application may be obtained by contacting the Tennessee Department of State, Corporation Division. When the charter application is returned by the Secretary of State, the applicant must return it to the Registrar's office in the county of location of the center. There is a filing fee; however, the charter does not need a notary nor representation by legal counsel.

## TAX EXEMPTIONS

### State Sales Tax

To obtain a tax exemption from state sales and use tax on tangible personal property as provided in T.C.A. 67-3014, a center must contact the Tennessee Department of Revenue, Sales and Use Tax Division. A copy of the senior center charter or governing document must accompany the application. A letter must be requested both from the cognizant Area Agency on Aging and the Tennessee Commission on Aging.

### Federal Income Tax

To be eligible for a federal income tax exemption under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, a center must be a nonprofit corporation whose purpose falls within certain guidelines.

- (a) Advantages of federal tax exemption status include:
  - 1. Exemption from paying corporate income tax;
  - 2. Eligibility for federal grants;
  - 3. Exemption from federal unemployment insurance contribution and state and local property tax;
  - 4. Eligibility for grants from foundations and donations from the general public which may be deducted from the donor's income tax;
  - 5. Exemption from paying Social Security taxes (F.I.C.A.) on employee's earnings; and,
  - 6. Exemption from paying certain sales taxes.
- (b) Information concerning the application process on this exemption is contained in IRS publication 557, "How to Apply for Recognition of Exemption for an Organization." This publication may be obtained from any IRS Service Center.
- (c) Advice on this procedure should be obtained from a tax professional familiar with this aspect of tax law.